

SOCIETY CLERICAL WORK

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The second topic assigned to me, namely, Society clerical work, of which there is no end, I shall deal with more briefly.

The organization of the various county medical societies must vary greatly so that again, because of my lack of acquaintance with other societies, I shall have to fall back on my experiences with the Hennepin County Medical Society, my connection with which dates from September, 1929, when I was asked to become executive secretary and librarian of the organization. My training and previous experience had been in the field of library work, but I have found that such a combination of jobs is of great interest.

Our society has a membership of 595. Its work is divided among some eighteen committees, five of which, the Executive, Ethics, Board of Censors, Board of Trustees, Delegates to the State Convention, are elected; the others, which are appointed by the President, carry the following titles: Advisory Committee to Women's Auxiliary, Committee for the Study of Trends in Medical Practice, Committee on Veterans' Legislation, Editing & Publishing, Entertainment & Social, Education & Publicity, Fellowship, Historical & Necrological, Interprofessional Relationship, Legislative & Medical Legal, Library & House, Program, Public Welfare, and University Relations. These committees, with the assistance of occasional special committees which are appointed from time to time, carry on the business and activities of the Society; the degree of activity shown by the committees being dependent upon the enthusiasm of the different chairmen and the amount of conviction they feel for the possibilities inherent in committee work. Certain of the committees hold meetings at stated intervals; others meet only as questions arise which demand their particular attention. The business of calling the meetings of the committees, taking stenographic notes, and subsequently separating the wheat from the chaff so that the minutes present an accurate, but not too verbose account of the work done, is during eight months of the year a constant feature of the clerical work. Indexing back files of these minutes is proving to be a large and time-consuming but essential undertaking.

The bookkeeping is a second phase of this work which is perhaps heavier during the winter months, but which is always to be reckoned with. The Society now operates under a carefully worked out budget, and an account of expenditures made on the basis of it are kept ever up to the minute, so that information as to the financial status of any committee or division of the Society is always available.

We keep no record of the amount of mail received each day, as I believe some societies do; it is opened in the office, and the stenographer checks the periodicals on the Kardex file, making notes of missing num-

bers which occasionally occur and writing to the dealers for them. When volumes are completed, they are prepared for binding by the clerical assistant. This work is done as soon after the completion of the volume as possible.

The Historical committee has adopted as one of its undertakings the biographical questionnaires which are sent to each member to be filled out. As is well known, sending out questionnaires does not mean that they will be returned with the requested information complete. We give this file as much attention as can be spared from the regular work, and hope eventually to have it up to date.

A second undertaking of this committee is the collection of old instruments and objects of medical interest. The making of a card file of the various items secured as well as a second file listing the donors, the arrangement of the displays, which must be changed at not too frequent intervals, devolve upon the office force, and fill in any minutes that might otherwise be idle.

In order to facilitate the work of the Program Committee and to assure as great variety as possible in the future programs, two card lists have been compiled, one representing the subjects presented during the last few years and the second giving names of the speakers with the titles of their talk. From October to May in addition to the monthly evening meetings, the Hennepin County Medical Society has weekly noon-day programs, at which one or more subjects, usually of a clinical nature, are presented. This file of topics is surprisingly extensive. During the season of meetings, there is considerable detail work in connection with the arrangements for meetings which is automatically carried on in the office.

Of the clerical work in connection with the Library itself. As many of the routine procedures as possible are turned over to the clerical assistant, but in view of the fact that there are only two people to carry on the work of the Society and Library we find it not always possible to maintain a hard and fast division of labor. So far, I have handled all the work of cataloging, checking for L. C. cards at the depository catalog at the University of Minnesota Library, and doing the subsequent typing. Eventually some of this work will be taken over by the assistant. A University student does the plating, perforating and marking of volumes, as well as the shelving, and assists greatly in checking and arranging the endless flood of duplicate volumes.

Book cards used in charging books to members are arranged by date. A borrower's card in a Kardex file, on which are listed the items borrowed is particularly useful on the many occasions on which the borrower wishes subsequently to refer to or when he has mentioned to a friend articles of particular interest he has read. These records are written up each morning by the stenographer.

A file of reprints of articles by members of the Society is a recent undertaking and necessitates a careful checking of the table of contents of each journal. Form post cards are used in making these requests for

reprints which when secured are inserted by means of the U-File-M-Binders in manila folders and filed alphabetically by the author in a vertical file.

This is by no means a complete summary of the occupations that might come under the heading **Society Clerical Work**. But it is a brief statement of certain phases of work, which, in a growing society, is constantly becoming larger and more varied.